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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 001307

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TAGS ORDER)

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [EUN](#) [GG](#) [GR](#) [RS](#)

SUBJECT: GREEK CONCERNS ABOUT SEMNEBY'S METHODS SHOULD NOT
PRECLUDE MOVING FORWARD ON SOME OF SEMNEBY'S RECOMMENDATIONS

REF: (A) BRUSSELS 822 (B) BRYZA-FRIED E-MAIL APRIL 17

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Classified By: Enlargement Unit Chief Vincent Carver for reasons 1.5 (B
/D).

SUMMARY

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¶1. (C) Greek Political and Security Committee (PSC) Ambassador Lozos told DAS Bryza April 17 that Greece largely shares U.S. views on Georgia and that Athens wants to reinforce Tbilisi's territorial integrity and Euro-Atlantic ties while remaining sensitive to Russian concerns. In this context, Lozos supported a "step-by-step joint U.S.-EU approach." He expressed consternation at EU Special Representative (EUSR) Semneby's "missionary zeal," said his stewardship had not met Greek expectations, and characterized Semneby's recent trip to Washington and complaints about Greek opposition to some of Semneby's proposals as "disloyal behavior to the Union." Despite these misgivings, Greece would support most of Semneby's recommendations if Tbilisi, the UN, and the OSCE are fully on board. END SUMMARY

GREEK - SYSTEMATIZED SUPPORT FOR GEORGIA

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¶2. (C) DAS Matt Bryza and Greek PSC Ambassador Lozos met April 17 to discuss Georgia and reports that Greece has been obstructing two key proposals of EUSR Peter Semneby on Abkhazia and South Ossetia, e.g.:

- Providing one EU policeman to complement UN police efforts in Abkhazia and one EU policeman to complement OSCE security/observer efforts in South Ossetia; and

- Extending the mandate of the EU's Border Security Team to both Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Both Bryza and Lozos agreed on the utility of expanding the EU's footprint in Georgia's conflict zones to help "unfreeze" discussions on conflict resolution and on the need to help Georgia move toward greater Euro-Atlantic integration. Lozos, noting that Greece "and a number of other member states" believe Russian concerns should be better taken into account, observed the historic and cultural ties between Greece and Georgia. Athens, he said, wants to help promote a stable and democratic Georgia. The Georgians, however, often have too high expectations and remain impatient and emotional. A step-by-step joint EU-U.S. approach might help calm down the Georgians and increase stability.

¶3. (C) Bryza stressed that Georgia will feel secure only once it knows its path to membership in NATO and the EU will

be determined by Georgia's own behavior rather than by political considerations within Europe (e.g., avoiding tension with Russia). Georgia sees the Baltic States as an example of what membership in Euro-Atlantic institutions can do for a country's relations with Russia, as Moscow decreased its pressure when it became clear there was no way to obstruct the Baltic states' movement toward NATO. The U.S. objective is to help Georgia enter the MAP process at the next NATO Summit if Georgia sustains its military and judicial reforms and its constructive approach toward conflict resolution.

COPIOUS CRITICISM OF SEMNEBY

14. (C) Lozos explained Greece's opposition to the recent proposals of EUSR Peter Semneby as resulting largely from procedural matters, Semneby's "missionary zeal," and aggressive style aimed at obtaining immediate EU approval of his proposals. Such attributes and actions have not won him Greek admiration. Rather, Semneby's record "is not up to our expectations." Lozos explained that, while the PSC approved the overwhelming majority of Semneby's proposals, Athens still had concerns about some of his ideas. Greece is not convinced of the value added of the two proposed police positions. According to Lozos, neither the UN nor the OSCE had approached the EU about this proposal and the collocation of EU police representatives in UN buildings. In fact, Greece does not even know the Georgian Government's position on the proposal. While others (apparently incoming EU President Portugal and possibly other member states) have similar and additional concerns, Greece would have no objections to sending the two police officers if both the UN and the OSCE accept the proposal.

15. (C) Lozos outlined Greek concerns about Semneby's proposal to use the nine-person EU border monitoring team for customs and rule-of-law missions. Lozos questioned the added value of having the border monitoring team perform such

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functions that are outside its official mandate, and in the difficult separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He also cautioned that doing so could send the wrong signal to both the Russian and Georgian authorities. Greece, however, would support creating two EU communications centers for border security cooperation in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, if these were acceptable to the Georgian Government. Rather than supporting Semneby's "academic and NGO-like" approach of making Georgia a test case for innovative ideas, Greece favors moving forward with those of Semneby's proposals that Athens has already supported.

16. (C) Not missing an opportunity to further criticize Semneby, Lozos pointed to Semneby's draft report that referred to trade promotion with northern Cyprus as a maladroitness effort that only alienated several member states, especially Cyprus, but also including Greece, Spain, Hungary, and Slovakia. Lozos also complained about both the U.S. and Lithuanian demarches in Athens regarding Greece's opposition to Semneby's latest proposals as unfairly characterizing the Greek position as obstructionist. To top this off, Semneby traveled to Washington rather than discussing how to resolve the problems with either Lozos personally or with the MFA in Athens. Such "whining to a third country," even a country with which Greece wants to work closely on Georgia, could be seen as "disloyal to the Union." Lozos added that he may raise this within the EU. Getting back on a constructive path, Lozos concluded that he may propose an informal trip with three or four other PSC ambassadors to Georgia to see how the EU can better help Tbilisi.

COMMENT

17. (C) Despite Lozos' stream of criticism against Semneby,

including Semneby's trip to Washington (and the fact that Semneby had not yet submitted a report on his trip), Lozos agreed with Bryza's main points -- the need to strengthen Georgia's confidence through greater Euro-Atlantic integration and clear support for Georgia's territorial integrity. He also stressed the need to move forward on the Semneby recommendations that Athens has already supported. Lozos did not object when Bryza emphasized the U.S. goal of getting Georgia into MAP at the next NATO summit, despite his professed sympathies for Russian sensitivities. Bryza offered to ask informally the UN, the OSCE, and the Georgian Government about Semneby's proposals with an eye to addressing Athens' procedural concerns. It will be important to press these issues forward to ensure they do not become pretexts for what may be Amb. Lozos' localized efforts to oppose Semneby's efforts on Georgia. Lozos claims he has tried to discuss these matters with Georgia's ambassador in Brussels. When Bryza conveyed this claim to the Georgian ambassador, she howled in disbelief, lamenting that she has tried for months to secure a meeting with Lozos, but with no success.

18. (U) DAS Bryza has cleared this message.

GRAY

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